

Beauty and the beast

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Jesse Beers





# Beauty And The Beast

A PLAY FOR CHILDREN  
IN THREE ACTS

*by Jesse Beers Jr.*



Samuel French, Inc.

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by **LILLIAN and ROBERT MASTERS**

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SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.

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# BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

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## BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

### STORY OF THE PLAY

Beauty is to be married to Amos, a country shepherd, but refuses, insisting she is in love with the Beast of the near-by castle, whom she saw in an apparition; he was not frightening, but a handsome prince. Amos and Beauty's father watch her closely to prevent her going to the Beast. The Beast, however, sends the gift of a magic mirror to Beauty in which she first sees him as he was before his enchantment; then as the horrendous Beast. Having fallen in love with the first image, she allows herself to be whisked to the castle. There she is given clues how she can release the Beast from his spell. When her father and Amos attempt to rescue her, and kill the Beast, she finds the courage to say the words that break the enchantment and return the Beast to the form of the handsome prince.

## BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

### CAST OF CHARACTERS

(6 males ; 4 females)

BEAUTY: *An ingenuous but spirited girl of fifteen. She appears first in a simple peasant dress, later changing into a beautiful gown.*

AMOS: *A simple, good-hearted but mulish young man of twenty-two. Wears a tunic and leggings as a shepherd.*

BEAST: *A handsome young prince costumed in a heavy cloak and cowl, with an animal mask as the Beast, beneath which is the usual costume of tights and tunic, as the prince.*

SYBIL: *The good witch is 300 years old but looks not a day over fifty. She wears a tall conical hat and Gothic dress.*

FATHER: *A man of forty, hard-working and stolid. Wears coarse clothing of leg-wrappings and a tunic.*

BOYS: *(Two) In handsome Gothic costumes of tights, tunics and capes. They are attractive youngsters of sixteen or so.*

GIRLS: *(Two) Pretty and sixteen. One is a courageous, adventuresome girl, and the other more timorous and willowy. Both wear Gothic gowns and long hair.*

DWARF: *A little hunch-backed mute, devoted to the Beast. Wears leggings and a tunic.*



# Beauty and the Beast

## ACT ONE

*The atmosphere of the play depends largely on the creation of a dark, romantic place, most simply done with black masking drapes, good lighting, and elementary props, but the action of the story can be aided by three scenic units: A fireplace and secret panel for Sybil's cottage at stage Right; a fireplace, window and Dutch door for Beauty at stage Left, and a massive fireplace flanked by curtained arches or double doors Center stage for the Beast. These units are partial scenes, not complete "box" sets; the action runs freely between them. A good deal of the detail suggested in the script depends not on elaborate staging but the will of the audience to believe they see what is not literally staged. Where flexible lighting is not possible, for the cross-dims the action should freeze into tableaux when the dialogue is shifted.*

BEAUTY. (*At fireplace Left, spinning*) I find life so very far from anywhere tedious, although I have never been anywhere to know if living there is more exciting. It seems as simple as A-B-C, though, that if Father and Amos and I can have good times together, then three times the three of us would have three times as much fun, and the people living in the village Father says is only over the hill and five miles away must have a hundred or more times as much fun. Father won't take me to the village—he says it is wicked and

no place for a girl of fifteen. Perhaps if I marry Amos, as I am told I shall when I am seventeen, he shall take me into town, and then I shall have more fun than I have ever had in my life! Why, I have never been further than the hill—just twenty minutes walk from our cottage door, and when I had walked that far one day Amos and Father came running from the fields and caught me and made me come back here again. "The Beast!" they whispered. "The Beast will see you. Hide! hide hide." The Beast? does a monster really live in the castle just beyond the hill? Father says so, and Amos's old mother says she saw him once, but—

(AMOS *enters by door.*)

I was just now talking about you!

AMOS. About me?

BEAUTY. Yes! And your mother.

AMOS. To whom? There's no one here.

BEAUTY. To the Beast!

AMOS. (*Starts to go*) God save us—

BEAUTY. I was talking to myself, you goose!

AMOS. Don't joke about that one!

BEAUTY. I'm curious about him—and the village that lays beyond his castle. Haven't you ever been to the village?

AMOS. Once, and never again.

BEAUTY. Why?

AMOS I've told you.

BEAUTY. Tell me again— I love to hear about it. Here, hold the yarn I've spun while I roll it.

(*He does so. They both sit at fireplace.*)

AMOS. I've forgotten what happened but it was horrible.

BEAUTY. You remember. You just don't want to frighten me.

AMOS. I *don't* remember. I've made myself forget.

BEAUTY. How long ago was it?

AMOS. Years and years—

BEAUTY. It wasn't at all. It was last March and the wind was howling through the birches—

AMOS. If you remember, why do you ask me to tell you?

BEAUTY. Because I like to frighten you!

AMOS. Don't!

BEAUTY. You shouldn't be afraid at your age.

AMOS. Everyone is afraid of the Beast! Strong men walk miles around his castle to avoid it. Even the blacksmith won't go near it—

BEAUTY. The screams and yells—the horrible sighs and the wild growling and baying—snarls and the shriek of animals being devoured—

AMOS. (*Rises; dropping yarn*) Stop it!

BEAUTY. You've dropped the yarn—don't pick it up! (*Picks up yarn*) You're so clumsy—look at your hands! Gnarled and knotty like my father and you're only twenty-two.

AMOS. I work hard in the fields all day—let me help you.

BEAUTY. Don't, don't, don't! You only snarl it more!

AMOS. Please don't be angry with me—

BEAUTY. I'm not angry.

AMOS. Why are you so impatient with me?

BEAUTY. I'm not! I'm very patient with you—I love you and we will be married in two years.

AMOS. I know. That's what your father says.

BEAUTY. Don't you want to marry me?

AMOS. You know I do!

BEAUTY. But, but, but!—why do you hesitate?

AMOS. I don't think you really love me.

BEAUTY. My father says I do—and he is supposed to know more than I.

AMOS. But do you?

BEAUTY. No.

AMOS. I didn't think so—

BEAUTY. Oh Amos, darling! we've been like brother and sister since we were children! I love you a different way. But real love—that is—the sort of love you don't

know about for a long time, and then suddenly do—that love—

AMOS. How would you know what that love was like?

BEAUTY. I know—because— I'm in love!

AMOS. With whom? There isn't another boy around for miles except me!

BEAUTY. I won't tell you.

AMOS. Tell me!

BEAUTY. No! You'll laugh—

(AMOS *chases her around and around.*)

You're pulling my hair! Amos, stop!

AMOS. Tell me!

BEAUTY. Ouch! No—ouch! Now do you see why I can't love you except as a—ouch—playmate?

AMOS. You'll grow to love me the other way, Beauty—as you get older.

BEAUTY. Never.

AMOS. Say you will!

BEAUTY. That hurts! Never—

AMOS. Why?

BEAUTY. Because I love another!

AMOS. Tell me! No? Tell me—the blacksmith!

BEAUTY. Oh, no, no, no! Ouch!

AMOS. Whom do you love?

BEAUTY. All right—the Beast!

(THUNDER.)

AMOS. —don't joke.

BEAUTY. I'm not.

AMOS. You've never seen him or you wouldn't say that.

BEAUTY. Neither have you! So how do you know?

AMOS. My mother saw him.

BEAUTY. She's a crazy old woman—you can't believe what she says.

AMOS. She was a young woman five years ago, and



then she saw the Beast, and her hair turned white, and she lost her senses.

BEAUTY. I've seen him too, and my hair isn't white, and I haven't gone out of my mind.

AMOS. That's how I know you've never seen him. You wouldn't be beautiful if you had.

BEAUTY. I saw him, and he is handsome, and seeing him made me more beautiful.

AMOS. He has hair all over his face, and fangs that reach from his jaw to his shoulders, and pointed ears like a wolf, and his hands—his hands curl and claw at you like no animal living.

BEAUTY. He is tall and blond and young, and the most beautiful man I have ever seen!

AMOS. You lie!

BEAUTY. I don't!

AMOS. You've never seen the Beast!

BEAUTY. I did! A year ago—I woke up in the night, and there was a full moon, and he stood by my bed looking at me, and he smiled sadly, and shook his head, and vanished—

AMOS. You dreamed it!

BEAUTY. I didn't! I didn't! I can remember how he looked and dressed to this day. I could see every thread in his cape—I could see the silver embroidery on his vest, and the curious emblems on his collar—I can draw them for you! Look!

AMOS. Don't! That's magic! Don't, Beauty!

BEAUTY. (*Takes stick from fireplace*) Here is a burnt stick—look, I'll draw on the floor—Don't bother me! I want to show you—I'll prove I saw him, because I've heard the same emblem is over the gateway to his castle—

AMOS. It is a magic symbol! If you draw it, he will come! Stop! Look! It's getting darker already! He'll come, Beauty. Stop drawing!

(*THUNDER.*)

BEAUTY. I'll prove to you I saw him!

BEAST. (*In dark up Center*) Stop her! Stop her! Sybil, don't let her draw the sign! She must not see me while I look like I am! Make her wait until the next full moon!

AMOS. Stop stop! Please—

BEAST. Stop her! Stop her!

(*LIGHTS coming up down Right.*)

SYBIL. Stop.

BEAUTY. —I've—forgotten the rest— Isn't that strange! I suddenly forgot the rest. It was as though first someone grabbed my hand, and then my mind went slowly blank. And yet a second ago I could see him again, and there on both sides of his collar was this strange picture—like a sun with a lion's face in the center of it, but I can't remember what the two initials were—two letters of the alphabet that were embroidered one on either side of the sun face. Where are you going?

AMOS. (*Going to door*) Back to the fields before you remember what those two accursed letters were! (*Exits.*)

BEAUTY. Oh if I only could remember! I could see him again! At least I know that! No one told me before. If I draw that symbol stitched on his clothing and chiseled in the stone over his gateway, he will come! No wonder Father was not interested in my dream, as he too called it. But I will remember that picture, and the two letters on either side of the sun-face, and when I do, I'll draw the picture, and he will come to see me again, and take me away from here over the hill, to his castle, where I shall dress in beautiful clothes, and go to great banquets, and dance at festive balls. For I know the only reason Father and Amos will not let me go near the castle of the Beast is because he would marry me and take me away from them— (*Spins again.*)

SYBIL. Foolish girl.

BEAST. (*In dark up Center*) She loves me.

SYBIL. She loves your riches.

BEAST. She saw me and didn't know I had riches.

SYBIL. She has put two and two together and knows the handsome young man who appeared by her bedside one night was the Beast of the castle, somehow.

BEAST. She loves me.

SYBIL. She won't when he sees you as you are now, and every day of the year except the twelve days of the full moon.

BEAST. But if she loves me for a year, I will become myself again—for always!

SYBIL. She will never love you once she sees you as you are.

BEAST. I will tell her that I will again be that man if she loves me in spite of my appearance!

SYBIL. Fangs as long as a man's arm.

BEAST. But only because of the curse!

SYBIL. Hair an inch long all over your face.

BEAST. It was your sister who cursed me!

SYBIL. And hands like no man or beast the world has ever known.

BEAST. Your sister was evil, and I would not love her, and she put this curse on me so no woman would ever love me!

SYBIL. That was three hundred years ago, and no woman ever has loved you. Not five years ago you tried to beg that poor woman over the hill to love you, and she went out of her mind—and you were so disappointed you came home and ate three live pigs for supper.

BEAST. I hate myself for behaving that way!

SYBIL. But you do.

BEAST. I can't control myself at times. Help me! You said you would.

SYBIL. I've tried. I try again and again. I'm trying now.

BEAST. Can't you hurry? Beauty will marry Amos in two years, and she is my last chance! She is the only

girl within reach of my castle. All other people have moved away. And I can't travel more than a horse's first wind from my castle.

SYBIL. Beast, I am not the sorceress my sister was. I am not as clever as her—besides, everyone knows evil magic is easier than good magic—curses are easier than blessings— I can smash this little vase—

(CRASH.)

But it took me three hours to make it. One second to destroy it—three hours to make it. Evil is quicker than good, and more lasting, I sometimes fear.

BEAST. You can't help me then.

SYBIL. I'll try.

BEAST. But you can't, can you?! Really?!

SYBIL. I try; I try.

BEAST. I must come see you.

SYBIL. (*Rises*) No!

BEAST. I'm coming to see you.

SYBIL. No, please! Let us talk through the space and darkness, but don't come to my cottage!

BEAST. I'm lonely! I have only my dwarf to talk to; and he is dumb and cannot answer me.

SYBIL. We talk every night across the trees and grass!

BEAST. But I never see you—and I want to sit by a hearthside and talk to someone. Please!

SYBIL. Then come. (*Shutters her window.*)

BEAST. Unlatch the door for me.

SYBIL. Use the secret entrance. You will frighten my servants—and help is so hard to come by in this region. You have scared all the population away—oh! the light gets dim—even the fire dwindles away to embers when he comes near. The candle goes out, and smokes furiously. Beast! Don't come! Please don't come!

BEAST. (*Off*) I'm lonely!

(*The secret panel opens slowly, and the BEAST comes in. He is beautiful dressed, and horrific.*)



BEAST. Sybil, say, "Come in! Come in! Welcome!"

SYBIL. (*Puts apron over head*) I can't!

BEAST. Act as though I were a neighbor come to call. Say "Welcome, Prince Alarming!" You used to joke with me, you know.

SYBIL. That was over space and darkness when we talked across the trees and grass through the night, and did not see each other.

BEAST. Look at me. Take your apron from over your head and look at me.

SYBIL. No.

BEAST. Am I so horrible?

SYBIL. Yes.

BEAST. (*To AUDIENCE*) Am I so horrible? (*To SYBIL*) At least, tell me "Welcome!"

SYBIL. Welcome.

BEAST. May I sit by your fire?

SYBIL. If you must.

BEAST. (*Sits*) It's a cold night out, neighbor!

SYBIL. Not half so cold as in here!

BEAST. That's because your fire has gone out! I shall put some wood on it.

SYBIL. No, no! It was burning briskly until you came in—

(*BEAST puts log on: magnesium flare and smoke.*)  
You frighten even the fire, I tell you!

BEAST. Oh what am I to do! What am I to do?

SYBIL. Are you crying, Beast?

BEAST. Yes.

SYBIL. (*Sits at fireplace*) Beast, there is a hood hanging by the fireplace. Put it on and hide your face, and I shall talk to you. It is stuffy under my apron.

(*BEAST does so.*)

Now, come sit by my feet, and rest your head on my lap—but keep the hood over your face! See, the fire has started to burn again! (*Takes apron from her head.*)

BEAST. Do you think I can go on living this way for—

ever? Don't you think I too have a heart that may break?

SYBIL. Do you have a heart, Beast?

BEAST. My heart your wicked sister could not change. She could make me the ugliest creature on the earth, but try as she might, she could not give me the soul of a beast.

SYBIL. Then there is hope, Beast!

BEAST. Hope? Hope, Sybil!

SYBIL. Yes—a sad hope, though, poor Beast.

BEAST. Tell me any hope, sad or otherwise.

SYBIL. You will not like it, Beast.

BEAST. Tell me! Any hope is good to me. If I cannot hope for love, and transformation back into myself, then give me hope—of death.

SYBIL. That is the hope I give you.

BEAST. Death?

SYBIL. Death if not love.

BEAST. Death if not love.

SYBIL. Is that what you want?

BEAST. —Yes, it is.

SYBIL. Think, because once I make my chant, there is no changing it. A witch cannot undo her own magic, you know. Though my sister regretted terribly her curse on you she could not undo it. She begged me on her deathbed to undo the curse she had put on you—for she wanted you to be free almost a second after she had uttered the spell. It was in a moment of terrible jealousy, Beast, that she cursed you, and she regretted it, and cursed herself, and died.

BEAST. I have thought: if Beauty will not love me, I would rather die, for I suddenly realize that I love her even if she cannot help me—I don't want her love just because it can transform me, I want her love because I love her. And if she will not love me, I do not care if any other woman ever loves me, even though their love too could change me back. Make your spell, Sybil.

(*"Double" voice for the magic chant. An off-stage voice joins SYBIL in speaking the chant.*)

SYBIL. Look down—look up. Look to the right—look to the left—close your eyes and think of light. Close your eyes and think of darkness. Open them and look at me. It is done.

BEAST. I feel better, Sybil. Thank you.

SYBIL. God help you, Beast, for I cannot do more than this!

BEAST. (*Rising*) This is enough. I feel happier than I have in a hundred years. I'll go now, and then your candle will re-light itself, and your fire stay burning without all this smoke. Good-bye, and thank you.

SYBIL. Beast! One more thing I can do for you, and it is a very little. Take this mirror. Send it to Beauty by your dwarf. When she looks in it she will see you as you were: then she will see you as you are. If then she does not break the mirror, she loves you. She will come with the dwarf to see you. But if she faint and drop the mirror, or drop it in horror, or throw it from her in revulsion, and it breaks, then she cannot love you, and you will die.

BEAST. The mirror is my life.

SYBIL. The mirror is your life.

BEAST. Thank you, good witch.

(*Cross-dim LIGHTS from down Right to down Left where BEAUTY sleeps on a feather mattress by the fire. RAIN, THUNDER, and LIGHTNING. A KNOCK on BEAUTY's door.*)

BEAUTY. What? I thought I heard someone knock. Hello? It could be father come home in spite of the storm. Hello? He said never unbar the door at night if he doesn't knock three times quickly. I'll wait.

(*KNOCK.*)

I know father sometimes stays in a hut near the fields if the weather turns evil as tonight, but if he did come

home he would knock three times quickly, he said. Unless—he were hurt or sick, and too weak—

(*KNOCK.*)

Whoever is knocking sounds weak and sick. The knocking seems to come from the lower half of the door as if whoever it was, was laying down—unable to move. Oh here's logic! If it is a sick man, and knocking so low on the door, he cannot hurt me. And if it is a tall man standing up, he will not see if I open the bottom half of the door, and peek! How clever of me!

(*KNOCK. BEAUTY opens bottom of door cautiously. DWARF bounds in at once.*)

Oh! Oh, oh, oh! Who are you? I never thought of a little man knocking at the door. I thought a tall man who wouldn't see me if I opened the bottom part of a door, or a sick man who couldn't hurt me—but—you are a dwarf! Yes yes, you say. Can't you talk? No. Will you hurt me? No? How can I believe you? Cross your heart?

(*DWARF does so.*)

But that's not positive, you know! Oh—you will give me a present? But that might be like Sleeping Beauty who accepted a present from a wicked witch! I will just look once at it. I won't eat it—that is, if it can be eaten—for it might be poison. But I can look at it!

(*DWARF holds out mirror.*)

Oh! A mirror! How beautiful! Oh thank you, Dwarf! Why do you look so anxiously at me? There are tears in your eyes. Why? Can't you tell me? Look in the mirror? All right—but why are you so worried-looking? I won't drop and break your mirror—is that what worries you? Of course I won't! See! I'll set it on the mantel and look at it and then—it's changing!—it isn't me any more that looks out of the glass. Oh! It is he! It is he! It is the Beast! The handsome, wonderful young man they call the Beast!—and so wrongly too! He isn't a beast—he is—he is changing—he isn't so handsome—he—he—he is the *BEAST!* (*Staggeres back and faints. Rises again—staggeres toward the mir-*



*ror—then looks away—tries to reach behind herself to get the mirror.)* Take it away! Please smash it—get rid of it! I can't look—it's getting dark—the fire is going out. I'm frightened! Please, please, I don't want the mirror. He is—horrible, horrible— (*Sobs*) poor man to look so horrible. How terrible it must be to look like that—how lonely he must be, poor beast. Poor BEAST! Yes, you say. Little dwarf, you know the Beast? You live with him—you are his servant? You brought me this mirror to show me the handsome prince and the Beast are the same person? But what happened to him? Why did he change? You can't talk—you can't tell me. But I suddenly must know! I'm in love with the handsome prince, and almost—yes, almost—I will look again—odd—I'm not frightened any more! I can look at the Beast and not be frightened, because I know the handsome prince is inside him—Look, Dwarf, the Beast is crying! There are tears in his eyes! He beckons to me—he wants me to come visit him! He is lonely, poor Beast. Lonely. Take me to him, Dwarf. Take me to the Castle of the Beast!

*(BLICKOUT, and up LIGHTS slowly Center. BEAST is before the smoking fireplace. DWARF enters with BEAUTY.)*

BEAST. *(His back to her)* You came.

BEAUTY. Yes.

BEAST. Because you pity me.

BEAUTY. You are lonely.

BEAST. I do not want pity.

BEAUTY. But you were crying.

BEAST. I cried from happiness.

BEAUTY. Why?

BEAST. I can't tell you.

BEAUTY. Because I said I would come visit you?

BEAST. No.

BEAUTY. Because I said I was sorry for you?

BEAST. NO!

BEAUTY. Don't snarl! What else did I say?

BEAST. Something else.

BEAUTY. I don't remember saying anything else about you.

BEAST. Not exactly about me.

BEAUTY. Oh! About someone else.

BEAST. Not exactly.

BEAUTY. Why do you keep your back to me. It is not polite.

BEAST. I am not polite.

BEAUTY. No, you aren't. You tease me with guessing games. What did I say that made you so happy you cried?

BEAST. I can't tell you! It's against the rules of the curse.

BEAUTY. The curse?

BEAST. I can't tell you any more. Guess! Guess what made me so happy!

BEAUTY. I wanted to smash the mirror?

(THUNDER.)

BEAST. No! No!

BEAUTY. I can't imagine.

BEAST. Then live here a while, and try to remember. I will go away from you. You will be all alone in the castle—perfectly safe. I will stay out of your sight, but I will watch you. If you remember, then draw this emblem on my collar and above the fireplace, on the ground with a stick, and I will come at once, and then, *then*, tell me what it is you said!

BEAUTY. But if you know, why don't you tell me?

BEAST. I can't. The curse on me won't let me. I must go. Anything you want, ask my dwarf.

BEAUTY. Anything?!

BEAST. Anything, but there is one thing I hope you will want!

BEAUTY. What is that?

BEAST. I can't tell you that either.

BEAUTY. Whatever it is—whatever I want, I will ask the dwarf.

BEAST. The dwarf can give you everything except the thing I want you to ask. That you will have to ask me for—that you will have to remember, for you have said it this evening, although you cannot remember. I will go—good-bye—remember the emblem, and draw it, but only if you remember what it is that made me happy. Only then. And guard the mirror. Keep it. Through it I can see you, although you will only see yourself from now on when you look in it. But for me it is my eyes. When you look into it, I see you. Guard it well, and try to remember—remember everything you said tonight. Farewell. (BEAST *vanishes*.)

BEAUTY. Beast! Beast, come back. I want to know if I can have a new dress—

(DWARF *pulls dress from darkness*.)

Oh! And a banquet—

(DWARF *pulls aside the black curtain, revealing a table set for one*.)

And friends! Lots of friends, and we shall dance and play games, and have a party. Oh don't shake your head. The Beast said I could have anything I wanted. And I wanted friends! (*Stamps foot*.)

(*Elegantly dressed COUPLES step from the blacks, in stately tableau*.)

Oh! Thank you, Beast! Thank you! I shall have a wonderful time! All my life I wanted to go to a castle and have new clothes, and beautiful friends—and thank you!

BEAST. (*Off—echo-box*) Remember! Remember, Beauty! Try to remember!

BEAUTY. Remember? Remember what? What have I forgotten? A new dress—a banquet—and friends! Oh, of course—music to dance by!

(*Claps hands. A trio of medieval instruments plays a pavan. ALL dance*.)

BEAST. (*Off*) Remember!

(*DWARF tries to get BEAUTY from the dance, but she shakes him off, and dances on as the Curtain falls on Act One.*)

END OF ACT ONE



## ACT TWO

*Immediately following the previous Act.*

BEAUTY. (*Wearing the new dress. To DWARF*) Don't bother me! Why must you keep tugging at my skirt? You're just like my father—whenever I'm having a good time, you want to stop me and tell me some chore to do. If I'm singing, I should be milking the cow; or if I'm dancing, I should be spinning yarn. Go away, Dwarf. Let me enjoy myself.

1ST BOY. He's trying to tell you something.

BEAUTY. I know. I am supposed to remember something I said, but I can't remember! I can't.

1ST BOY. Can't he speak?

BEAUTY. No.

1ST BOY. Is he your servant?

BEAUTY. No. He belongs to the—lord of the castle.

1ST GIRL. Oh this is not your castle then!

BEAUTY. —Yes! In a way!

1ST GIRL. In a way? That's strange, don't you think?

2ND BOY. She may be visiting here. Are you a guest here?

BEAUTY. Yes. I am visiting for a while.

1ST BOY. Then you must know where we are! Whose castle is this?

BEAUTY. Don't you know? I thought *you* lived here and danced and had parties like this all the time.

1ST GIRL. Oh no! We thought you lived here, and were a witch and conjured us all here.

BEAUTY. I'm not a witch!

2ND GIRL. She's beautiful enough to be a witch—and that gown she has on— I have never seen anything so gorgeous in these parts.

BEAUTY. It was given to me.

1ST BOY. How did we get here—you must know that.

BEAUTY. I just asked the dwarf, and you appeared.  
I thought you were magic people.

1ST GIRL. Not I!

2ND GIRL. Nor I. We were having a dance at my house in the village, and suddenly everything got dark, and when we could see again, we were here.

2ND BOY. It was only a second. Where are we?

BEAUTY. Why, you are in the castle of the—

*(As DWARF shakes his head.)*

what, Dwarf?

1ST GIRL. What does the silly creature shake his head for?

BEAUTY. I can't tell you where you are!

1ST GIRL. You're a witch, that's why! You cast a spell over us—

2ND GIRL. I'm afraid! I want to go home.

1ST BOY. There's no need to be afraid! She won't hurt us, will you?

BEAUTY. No! I'm just a plain girl myself; don't be afraid.

1ST GIRL. Were you spirited here too?

BEAUTY. The dwarf brought me here.

2ND GIRL. It's his castle, and he's an evil magician! I knew it. Look at him squint at me! He's casting a spell on me! Help help—

1ST BOY. Don't be frightened! He's not a magician, is he?

BEAUTY. I don't know. I don't think so. He has been very nice so far.

2ND GIRL. I want to go home! This is a terrible place! It is so gloomy and dark, and the fire smokes terribly, and I hear strange cries and sounds when the music isn't playing.

2ND BOY. Let's dance again. That was fun, and we'll pretend we are lords and ladies of the castle, and magic ourselves!

1ST GIRL. All right!

BEAUTY. Yes yes! We will dance and have lots of fun. Music! (*Claps her hands.*)

(*ALL dance. A faint SHRIEK is heard. ALL freeze.*)

It was nothing! Just the wind.

2ND GIRL. It wasn't. It sounded just like a lamb crying. I know the sound. I have sat watching my father's flock, and once a wolf caught a baby lamb and it cried like that. I want to go home! Please, please let us go home.

BEAUTY. No! We are having a party, just like I dreamed—like I always wanted. You can't go home and leave me alone!

2ND BOY. But she is crying. She is terribly frightened.

1ST BOY. Send the girls home, and we will stay and protect you.

BEAUTY. And dance with me?

1ST BOY. Yes!

BEAUTY. Are you really from the village?

1ST BOY. Yes. We live there all the year round.

BEAUTY. Oh, I've always wanted to live in the village! It sounds so gay and so beautiful. Do you dance all the time in the village, and go to parties?

1ST BOY. —lots of the time we do.

2ND BOY. Lots of the time we have to go to school and work too.

BEAUTY. I don't believe it! Why, everyone out our way who has been to the village, comes back, and tells us what a party people have in the village. How there are fetes and carnivals all the time.

2ND BOY. The country folk only come to town when there is a fair, so they think there is one all the time.

1ST GIRL. You must send us home. We demand it, or we shall tell our fathers, and they will tell the Sheriff, and he will arrest you.

2ND GIRL. Because you're a witch!

BEAUTY. I'm not a witch!

2ND GIRL. You are! You spelled us, and made us come here.

BEAUTY. The dwarf did it!

2ND GIRL. He's your servant! You made him do things.

BEAUTY. I don't! I was made to come here myself! I live in a little cottage over the hill with my father, and I am to be married in two years to a shepherd named Amos.

1ST BOY. Then run away with us. Come on.

BEAUTY. —No.

1ST GIRL. No? But you said you were made to come here. Don't you want to escape?

BEAUTY. I keep thinking there is some reason why I must stay—why I want to stay. Having a party and dancing has made it all fly from my mind.

1ST BOY. That's a spell, if you don't know why you must stay here. You've been spelled and you must come with us.

BEAUTY. (*Crying*) I can't! I can't. I don't know why—I can't tell you, anyway. But I must stay. I want to stay. I'll lose something wonderful if I go—

1ST GIRL. What? Your beautiful gown? I'll give you one of mine and you can be married in it.

BEAUTY. No. It's not this magic gown the dwarf gave me.

1ST BOY. What then? Will you miss the party and the dancing? We dance every Saturday and you can come to the village and dance with us. I'll drive over in my father's wagon and pick you up so you don't have to walk.

BEAUTY. No, no—you're all so kind! I've always wanted a beautiful dress, and now I have one, and you offer to give me another. I've always dreamed of going to the village, and dancing, and having a wonderful time, and now I am, and you offer to take me to more dances and parties, but it isn't that. It's something else.

1ST GIRL. It's *someone* else!

BEAUTY. Yes.

1ST GIRL. He lives in this castle?

BEAUTY. Yes.

2ND GIRL. Is—is he handsome?

BEAUTY. He's the handsomest man in the world!

ALL. Who is he?

BEAUTY. I can't tell you.

1ST BOY. Why?

BEAUTY. You wouldn't believe me.

2ND BOY. Yes, we would.

ALL. (*Ad-lib*) Come on, tell us. Please tell us. We'll believe you.

BEAUTY. Well, once there was a handsome prince who lived in this castle—over three hundred years ago. Three hundred and twenty-one, to be exact. On his twenty-first birthday, when he had come of age, his father and mother wanted him to pick a wife. The most beautiful girls of the kingdom were presented to him at his twenty-first birthday party, among them two sisters named Sybil and Theodora.

1ST GIRL. Are you making this up as you go along? It sounds like a fairy tale.

BEAUTY. No! It's true. And it's funny, but I never knew all this myself—it seems to be coming to me from the air. There is a low beautiful voice speaking, telling me.

(*Dim LIGHTS up a bit on SYBIL down Right.*)

1ST BOY. Go on!

BEAUTY. Both of the sisters were cousins of the prince—second or third cousins, and they had known him all their lives. Theodora was blonde and lively, and Sybil was brown-haired and quiet and read many books for her age. Both were in love with the prince, but he loved neither of them, for—here is a shocking part—he was a very vain young man. This is not surprising, since he was the handsomest boy for miles and kingdoms around. He had curling red hair, and was six



feet tall in his stocking feet, even when he was seventeen.

2ND GIRL. I should like to have met him.

1ST GIRL. I wouldn't—not if he was conceited.

BEAUTY. He was, terribly, although really it was not entirely his fault. His parents and his aunts and uncles and all the courtiers made such fuss over him all the time, and told him how handsome he was. They would stop talking if he came in the room, and smile, and look at each other, and whisper so he could hear, "Isn't he the bravest prince in these parts—the most beautiful?"

2ND BOY. That would go to anyone's head.

BEAUTY. It did. When he was asked to pick a bride, he looked at all the princesses and duchesses and queens from the whole world this side of the ocean, and shook his head. And he laughed when his two cousins were presented to him, for they asked to be allowed to march before the throne where he sat, choosing a wife. Sybil ran away crying, but Theodora was so broken-hearted, and even furious at being laughed at, that she stopped before him, tore her sleeves, and mussed up her hair, and cried a curse.

1ST GIRL. I don't believe that!

2ND GIRL. Oh you must! He deserved it.

1ST BOY. What did she say?

SYBIL. (*Down Right*) "Come from the woods, beasts of the forest; walk around this man who pretends to be human, but he is icy, or he is cold, or he has the heart of the wildest animal. Come walk around him in a slow circle, for he is your master, beasts of the wild woods, and the dark forests. He is the handsomest of men, but he has no heart. Let him be the ugliest of animals, and learn to be human. Let him suffer to find his heart. Let him be so no woman will wed him, although he remain the richest of men, and live here in this castle for centuries. Let the beautiful be made hideous, the heartless suffer, and let him only be returned to his present shape when a woman can find

in her heart love for his soul, in spite of his bestial shape."

*(LIGHTS fade down Right.)*

1ST GIRL. What happened next?

2ND GIRL. Who was that talking?

1ST GIRL. Wasn't it this princess?

2ND BOY. No. I heard someone else speak.

BEAUTY. It was I, wasn't it?

1ST BOY. No. I too heard someone else talking.

1ST GIRL. But what happened next?

BEAUTY. I don't know!

1ST GIRL. You do know!

2ND GIRL. You're teasing us! You must never start a story if you don't know the ending. It is bad luck.

2ND BOY. She knows what happened next—and so do I.

ALL. *(Ad lib)* Then tell us!

2ND BOY. Look at the picture carved in stone over the mantel. Haven't you ever heard about that before—the sun with the lion's face in the center, and the letters—

1ST BOY. Don't say them or he'll come!

2ND GIRL. Who'll come?

1ST BOY. We can't tell you. Hurry. We must get out of here!

1ST GIRL. Where are we? Why are you so frightened?

1ST BOY. No girl is ever told about that symbol, but boys are. For three hundred years someone has lived in this castle, and wandered the countryside at night, terrorizing young girls, begging them— But hurry! Let's go.

1ST GIRL. Come with us!

BEAUTY. No!

2ND GIRL. But I don't understand. What is wrong? Why are you all so frightened? I was frightened before, but I'm not now. I don't see why two letters on

either side of a sun-face should frighten you. Only the letters E—R—

(*THUNDER.*)

1ST BOY. Run! Run for your lives!

2ND BOY. Run!

2ND GIRL. But why?

1ST GIRL. I know why! I remember now. The *BEAST* is coming!

(*2ND GIRL faints. BOYS carry her off.*)

Come with us!

BEAUTY. I can't.

1ST GIRL. You must! You must!

BEAUTY. I can't.

1ST GIRL. Why? Are you cursed too?

BEAUTY. No. I remember what I said when the dwarf showed me the mirror. I know why it is I can't leave, even though you promise me a nice dress, and your boy promised to take me to dances and parties.

1ST GIRL. Why? Why?!

BEAUTY. Because I love the Beast.

(*THUNDER.*)

1ST GIRL. God save you, you wretched girl. (*1ST GIRL exits.*)

BEAUTY. Don't all leave me! I know I love him, but now that I am alone, I'm afraid to see him again. And he's coming— I can hear footsteps getting closer! Half of me is frightened witless, and half of me wants to see him! Half of me sees through that fearful face at the prince who once stood by my bed, and half of me sees nothing but that terrible face. I must run! He is coming—closer and closer! What shall I do? The mirror! He watches me through the mirror. If I smash it, he can't see me, and I'll be able to hide! The mirror—where did I put it! Here! (*Grabs mirror from mantel as if to smash it*) But he said he wanted to watch me,

he looked so lonely, so sad when he said it. As if—as if he loved me but could not say so. (*Puts mirror back on mantel*) I will run away so he cannot follow me, but I must not take away his happiness in just watching me through the mirror. I'll leave it here, and run away from it.

BEAST. (*Off*) Beauty! You called me! I heard you—

BEAUTY. No! No, I didn't mean to. It wasn't me—it was that other girl who said the magic letters—where shall I go?

SYBIL. (*Down Right*) Come here.

BEAUTY. Where? Who spoke?

SYBIL. Just walk. I will guide you. Follow, follow, follow.

(*BEAUTY exits. BEAST enters as LIGHTS fade up Center, and brighten down Right.*)

BEAST. She's gone! Beauty, where are you—

BEAUTY. (*Off*) Where do I go? It's night, and only stars over head and darkness all around me! Things fly in the night and brush by me, and I stumble through brambles and thorns!

SYBIL. Follow my voice. Follow, follow.

(*Enter BEAUTY down Right.*)

Come in, my dear, and sit by the fire.

BEAUTY. But where am I—who are you? I wandered through the dark, and suddenly my hand was on a door latch, and I opened the door, and here I am in a bright cheerful room with a fire burning. Who are you?

SYBIL. I am Sybil, the brown-haired sister.

BEAUTY. But you are three hundred years old!

SYBIL. I too am under enchantment. I and the Beast. As my sister Theodora died, she asked me to free the Prince from her curse, and she enchanted me, so I would live as long as he lives.

BEAUTY. How long will that be?

SYBIL. A few hours ago, he was destined to live for eternity, but I made a new spell, and now he shall live

only so long as that mirror the dwarf gave you is not broken.

BEAUTY. Broken?! But I almost broke it just now!

SYBIL. But you did not break it—you would not have broken it. You did not want to hurt the Prince. If you had not shown this thoughtfulness for him—this time, and when you began to feel sorry for the Beast rather than afraid of him—I would not have called you.

BEAUTY. Why?

SYBIL. Because he loves you, and if you could not possibly love him, it were better you broke the mirror, and he died.

BEAUTY. I shall never break the mirror!

SYBIL. Kind girl.

BEAUTY. I will never want to hurt him—I even—

SYBIL. What?

BEAUTY. I don't know! I think I love him, but then I am afraid!

SYBIL. Yes, yes—that is the curse.

BEAUTY. Can't it be broken?

SYBIL. Yes.

BEAUTY. How?!

SYBIL. My dear, I cannot tell you, for the curse has to be broken unwittingly. It must be broken by someone who does not know what they do—in fact, you must understand, the way in which it is broken cannot be thought about. It must be a spontaneous feeling—a sudden feeling, not a magical hokus-pokus.

BEAUTY. If I only could help him!

SYBIL. You're getting close!

BEAUTY. If only I didn't fear him!

SYBIL. Closer!

BEAUTY. I even love him when I close my eyes, and see through that terrible face.

(*THUNDER.*)

SYBIL. You are there! That is it! Send for him and say so!



BEAUTY. I can't send for him!

SYBIL. Why?!

BEAUTY. Because then the bad cowardly side of me becomes afraid! I love him, and if he were accidentally to appear, I would say so, but to send for him, to determine to do it, I cannot!

SYBIL. Ah dear, dear child—you are young. If you believe something, you can't stand by and wait for an accident to bring it to you, or to make you act. You must go out and search—but this is too much for you, isn't it? You don't understand.

BEAUTY. A little. If I only could see him once more, as he was that night he stood in my room!

SYBIL. Would that help?

BEAUTY. Oh yes! Then I could remember him more clearly, and when I look at the Beast, I would see him.

SYBIL. Does the way he looks matter?

BEAUTY. Yes, it does—

SYBIL. Of course it would. You shall have your wish. Wait here by the fire. There is a full moon tonight. When the moon rises, he shall walk in the door.

BEAUTY. As he really is?!

SYBIL. As he looked three hundred years ago before his enchantment. Wait here. Don't run away. Don't be frightened. The fire will go out, and the candle, as he approaches, but don't be frightened. You will only see him dimly, in the light of the moon, as the last time when he came to your bedside. That is all the light you can have. Don't ask for more. Good-bye. (*Exit SYBIL by the door.*)

BEAUTY. (*Waits. The fire grows dim. She rises. The candle sputters. She clutches her hands. The door opens*) Oh!

(*AMOS peeks in*)

Oh—it's only you.

AMOS. Is this the Castle of the Beast?

BEAUTY. No. It's Sybil's cottage.

AMOS. (*More bravely*) Oh! I've come to rescue you.

BEAUTY. I don't want to be rescued.

AMOS. You have to be rescued. You are in mortal danger.

BEAUTY. I am perfectly safe, thank you. Now go on home.

AMOS. Two boys and two girls came wandering to our cottage, all their clothing torn and ragged, and their hair messed up. They babbled about having been in the Castle of the Beast, and seeing a beautiful young girl there who said she was a prisoner.

BEAUTY. Well, go look for her.

AMOS. She was you.

BEAUTY. How'd you know?

AMOS. There could be only one beautiful girl around here.

BEAUTY. Oh, Amos, don't start that.

AMOS. I can't help it. Finding you again, when I was sure you were dead, or locked in that horrible castle.

BEAUTY. Amos, we are playmates, dear friends, but—

AMOS. But we've always planned on getting married!

BEAUTY. We were children.

AMOS. But I love you!

BEAUTY. (*Sighs*) And I love another.

AMOS. Who?! There is no one else around here!

BEAUTY. I told you.

AMOS. You can't love—that one!

BEAUTY. I do. I am waiting to meet him now and tell him.

AMOS. No! They said you were bewitched.

BEAUTY. When the moon comes up, he will walk in that door.

AMOS. He's cast a spell on you!

BEAUTY. No. He has not. I came of my own free will, and I stay here because I want to, and I'm meeting him because I asked to.

AMOS. He's witched you! Just as the villagers said. Those boys and girls from the village who were spirited here and made to dance and sing—

BEAUTY. They weren't made to at all. They were

having a perfectly lovely time until they found out they were in the Castle of the Beast.

AMOS. They were witched too, they said!

BEAUTY. He wouldn't witch anyone. He isn't a magician. He is kind and good.

(THUNDER.)

AMOS. He eats people, and frightens women.

BEAUTY. He doesn't eat people. He eats sheep.

AMOS. Isn't that horrible enough?!

BEAUTY. We eat sheep too, you silly boy. We had lamb chops last night for supper.

AMOS. But he eats *whole* sheep!

BEAUTY. If we like lamb chops, and he likes a whole lamb, I can't see that it makes any difference. It's all the same to the lamb, goodness knows.

AMOS. You are bewitched, and I shall have to rescue you by force.

BEAUTY. Don't touch me, or I shall tickle you.

AMOS. Tickle me?

BEAUTY. You know how ticklish you are.

AMOS. You can't tickle someone when they are rescuing you!

BEAUTY. But I don't want to be rescued, and I shall tickle you.

AMOS. I am ticklish—so I shall have to go get help. I'll be back, Beauty—with your father and all the villagers, and we shall rescue you.

BEAUTY. I don't want to be!

AMOS. It's for your own good. You have to be. Your father is worried to distraction.

BEAUTY. Tell him I am all right.

AMOS. But you aren't. You obviously are under a spell. Or you would want to come home with me. Good-bye for now, Beauty. I will be back with a lot of people, and we shall rescue you.

BEAUTY. But I want to stay here! I am happy, in a different way than I ever thought I would be. I thought

I wanted new dresses, and parties, but see, my dress is torn from the thorns and brambles, and all the village people would not stay to my party, so I am alone, but I am happy. I'm waiting for someone I want to see, and nothing else in the world matters—parties or dresses or anything!

AMOS. You're bewitched. You even let the fire go out, —here. I'll put a log on. Stay right here until I come back.

BEAUTY. I will only wait until he comes, and we'll go away forever.

AMOS. I won't let you. Good-bye.

*(The fire blazes again. AMOS leaves. BEAUTY dozes. The fire gets smoky and dies. The candle goes out. The door opens.)*

BEAST. Beauty, may I come in?

BEAUTY. *(Awakening)* Who's there?!

BEAST. It is I, the *BEAST*.

BEAST. *(Sighs in fear)* —Yes, come in.

CURTAIN

END OF ACT TWO

## ACT THREE

*Immediately following Act Two.*

*(The BEAST, now the PRINCE, enters completely transformed in a dashing cloak and tights.)*

BEAUTY. Oh! I see you again as you were!

PRINCE. Yes. When the moon is full, I assume my former shape.

BEAUTY. Why can't the moon be full every night of the year?

PRINCE. Why is there evil magic in the world? Why is there evil emotion, the one second of bad feeling that makes people do wicked things which they forever regret?

BEAUTY. I would never curse you as Theodora did.

PRINCE. Because I love you, you won't. Because I am a different person than I was. In three hundred years I've learned to be kind and considerate.

BEAUTY. Does it take so long to learn to be kind?

PRINCE. It took me that long, but you have learned in a shorter time.

BEAUTY. Was I ever unkind?

PRINCE. You have been unkind to Amos many times—you too have been a little vain, and wanted only parties and new dresses.

BEAUTY. I know. And then I saw you one night, and you looked so sad, something happened to my heart. I knew happiness was with you, and yet not noisy happiness—not carnivals and parties, and living in the village with a lot of friends.

PRINCE. Happiness is often just one other person—is a lot of the time lonely.

BEAUTY. I'm beginning to see.

PRINCE. With me, you would be happy, but you would be happy in a different way—you will not see this face of mine for a year, but that of the Beast, but you must love the Beast, for he is me.

BEAUTY. Already I love the Beast.

PRINCE. You must send for him, and tell him.

BEAUTY. You are he. Can't I tell you?

PRINCE. No. You must look at the face of the Beast and say—"I love you," and mean it.

BEAUTY. I'll try—

PRINCE. Try? You can't try to love someone, Beauty. You really have to love them. You can't be just kind—you must really see beyond the face to the man within.

BEAUTY. I love you! You!

PRINCE. That will not break the spell, dear girl! This moment now when you see me is my holiday from the curse. All is suspended for these few hours—no clock ticks, no sound is heard—for me time is stopped, until the moon goes down. Then again for thirty days I am the Beast.

BEAUTY. Don't ever become the Beast again!

BEAST. I can't help it— I do. And I shall wait, roaming the dark corridors of my castle, watching you in the magic mirror, waiting for you to find you love beyond my face, and love me no matter what I look like!

BEAUTY. Is that possible?

PRINCE. It must be made possible! It is the only power that can kill the curse. Such a love is more than magic—more powerful than witches and magicians.

BEAUTY. Talk on and on— I hear the Beast when you speak now—I hear his gentle voice when you speak, and I shall see your face when again I meet him.

PRINCE. You must meet him soon. You must draw the sign on the floor and the letters E—R! and he shall come, because you called. Then tell him, I love you!

BEAUTY. What does E—R mean?

PRINCE. They are my initials.



BEAUTY. What is your name?

PRINCE. I can't tell you— I am the Beast. Call me soon, and guard the mirror. It is my life. When it breaks, I die.

BEAUTY. I shall.

PRINCE. Where is it now?

BEAUTY. I left it in the castle. I ran away from it. I was afraid the Beast would find me when he watched me through it.

PRINCE. He must watch you through it! It is his happiness! Keep it with you! It must not even fall and break by accident.

BEAUTY. I shall go get it as soon as you leave.

PRINCE. I leave soon. Let me hold your hand.

*(Cross-dim to down Left where FATHER, AMOS and the COUPLES are seated about.)*

AMOS. She is bewitched! I tried to bring her away with me and she wouldn't come!

1ST BOY. She wouldn't come with us either when we left.

1ST GIRL. I stayed behind at the risk of my life, trying to talk her into escaping, but she said she couldn't.

2ND GIRL. She said she was in love with the Beast! You know she's mad!

AMOS. Just like my poor mother. Her hair will turn white and she will take leave of her senses.

1ST GIRL. Poor girl.

2ND BOY. She should never have been left alone.

FATHER. It is my fault! Oh my poor daughter, why did I leave you alone? Why have I never taken you away from this dreadful countryside where the Beast's castle is, and where he roams in the dead of night?

AMOS. I've tried to tell you should sell your cottage and move into the village where there are walls and gates and soldiers for protection against the Beast, but you wouldn't go.

FATHER. I've been stubborn and selfish. And this is what has happened. I've always lived here. Poor Beauty's mother came to this cottage a bride, and died here when she was very young. I couldn't bring myself to leave the cottage where I've been so happy, and now—this has happened. My daughter is captured by the Beast and bewitched.

AMOS. We must rescue her!

FATHER. It is too late.

AMOS. We must try anyway. I'm sure she is not harmed yet. Her hair had not turned white when I saw her—she was as beautiful as ever.

FATHER. What are we against the Beast? We have no arms—

AMOS. We shall use pitchforks.

FATHER. There is only one man, three boys, and two girls.

AMOS. We are strong boys, and I am of age.

1ST BOY. So am I.

2ND BOY. I'm almost twenty-one. I'm almost of age too.

AMOS. We shall attack the Beast and kill him.

FATHER. He is fearful and large. He will paralyze us with his eyes—he will look at us and turn us to stone.

2ND GIRL. I'm frightened! I'll stay here and tend the fire, and make tea for when you come back.

1ST GIRL. Will you stay here alone? I'm going with the boys.

2ND GIRL. Don't leave me alone!

1ST BOY. Girls can't go! Only boys.

1ST GIRL. I will too go. Boys are no stronger than girls.

1ST BOY. They are too—and braver.

FATHER. Boys are stronger, but not braver, all the time. The girls cannot go. What could I say to your fathers if anything happened to you. You will lock yourselves in here, and open the door to no one. *No one!* Oh, if Beauty had only listened to me, and not

opened the door, she would be still here. Why did she open the door?

2ND BOY. (*Darkly*) The Beast can walk through doors. I saw him one night in the village, walk right through a barred door, and come out again, carrying a screaming woman.

1ST BOY. Nonsense! Your father shuts up your house so tightly at night you can't even see when it is daylight. You have to use an alarm clock. Let's go. We can waste no time.

AMOS. Yes! Let's talk no more. Here is a pitchfork for you, and a sickle for you. I shall carry a spade, and—

FATHER. I have my large axe. Bar the door after us, and open to no one.

1ST BOY. Good-bye—even farewell perhaps. Unbar the door to no one.

(*Exit BOYS, AMOS, and FATHER. The GIRLS quickly bar the door.*)

2ND GIRL. We're safe! We will build up the fire so no one can slide down the chimney, and huddle close to it and tell happy stories to make the time pass quickly.

1ST GIRL. They can never kill the Beast.

2ND GIRL. They can!

1ST GIRL. They can't. He is magic. And if he is killed, he must be killed by magic. What was magical about the castle when we were there? Did you notice anything?

2ND GIRL. No.

1ST GIRL. Stop crying. It won't help a bit. We must think

2ND GIRL. They will all be killed, or turned into stone—which is worse!

1ST GIRL. Think, you silly goose, instead of blubbering. What was there magic about the castle? The furniture? Beauty heard voices telling her the story she told us, and we even heard a voice, only we thought it

was her speaking. Where did the voices come from?

2ND GIRL. I don't know! Everything was hateful about the castle. Everything was ugly and dark, and creaky. There were all sorts of noises, and whisperings, and everytime I looked around I saw faces—once I even saw a hideous face looking at me from the mirror, and I started to cry—

1ST GIRL. What mirror?!

2ND GIRL. The one that stood on the mantel above the fire. It was a horrible mirror with gold figures all over it and—there, instead of my own reflection, I saw a dark dim hairy face—and—

1ST GIRL. Why didn't you tell us?!

2ND GIRL. I couldn't! It went away at once, and there was my own face again, and I thought I had been seeing things. I didn't know it was the Castle of the Beast or I would have known it was magic.

1ST GIRL. That's it, then! Don't you see? That was the Beast you saw looking from the mirror!

2ND GIRL. Oh no! Is my hair turning white?

1ST GIRL. No. He didn't look at you long enough for that. But it was he, and his soul is in that mirror! It's old magic—I've heard it before—my granny used to tell how sometimes the souls of wicked people are caught in mirrors and they can't get out until someone breaks the mirror. Then it is seven years bad luck you know.

2ND GIRL. But if we break the mirror he will be free to haunt us!

1ST GIRL. But he *is* free and he *is* haunting the whole countryside, so that must mean if we break the mirror in which you saw his face, he will die. Come on. We've got to catch up with the boys and tell them all they have to do is break the mirror.

2ND GIRL. How do you know?

1ST GIRL. I'm guessing, but it is worth a try! Come on!

2ND GIRL. No! They told us not to unbar the door!

1ST GIRL. Then we will climb out a window—that way we won't be breaking their orders.

2ND GIRL. No! Let's stay here by the fire where it is bright and safe and warm.

1ST GIRL. Coward! I'm going. Do you want your boy to be killed? Don't you want to marry him some day?

2ND GIRL. I'm afraid I'll be killed myself, and won't be able to marry anyone!

1ST GIRL. I'm not afraid. Let's go. (*Opens a window and puts a stool in front of it.*)

2ND GIRL. Don't leave me alone! See! It is storming and evil out! Let's stay here.

1ST GIRL. No. I don't like to be left here huddled up with a cry-baby. I want to be out doing things just like the boys do.

2ND GIRL. Your boy won't like it if you disobey and go after them.

1ST GIRL. I don't care what he says. He has all the fun. Boys do all the things that are fun. I'm not staying here. I'm going after those foolish men and tell them pitchforks and sickles and axes won't kill the Beast, but magic—smash the mirror and he'll die! (*Exits through window.*)

2ND GIRL. Don't leave me alone! Wait!

(*Goes to window. 1ST GIRL reaches through, and they struggle until 2ND GIRL is pulled through also.*)

(*Cross dim to up Center. AMOS, then FATHER, and BOYS peek through double-doors, and then come in. They see the DWARF before the fireplace, brooding unhappily, and ALL jump.*)

AMOS. It's an ugly dwarf!

1ST BOY. Shh! He'll hear you. He's the Beast's servant.

2ND BOY. He's magic too.

FATHER. He's little. We'll capture him, and make him tell us where the Beast is sleeping. We will kill him in his sleep.

1ST BOY. He can't speak. The dwarf is dumb—he cannot say a word.

FATHER. When I say "jump" all jump on him. *Jump!*  
(ALL *wrestle with the DWARF and tie him to a chair.*)

Now, where is the Beast?

1ST BOY. He can't talk. He's only a helpless little dwarf. We should not be cruel to him.

2ND BOY. He's a wicked magician like the rest—like the Beast and the witch.

AMOS. Beauty is not a witch!

2ND BOY. (*Suddenly*) She enchanted, and that's the same thing.

FATHER. Where is the Beast?!

1ST BOY. He has no tongue, I tell you!

FATHER. Make him write it down, then.

1ST BOY. He says he can't write.

FATHER. Untie his legs then, and make him show us where the Beast sleeps.

2ND BOY. He might lead us into a trap—a dungeon or pitfall or secret room.

AMOS. We must leave him tied up, and look for the Beast room by room.

1ST BOY. It's a big castle.

2ND BOY. And a dark, spooky one.

1ST BOY. With cobwebs and spiders and wet pools on the floor.

FATHER. I must find my daughter! Let's search.

2ND BOY. Let's hide here until the Beast comes back. He is bound to come back to this room sooner or later. It is the main room of the castle, and see, the dwarf has laid out supper for one at the table.

FATHER. Bright boy! Hide, everyone—and when the Beast sits down to eat, we will attack him, and kill him. Face the dwarf's chair away from the door, so the Beast cannot see that he is tied up.



(*Business, and ALL hide. Cross-dim to down Right where BEAUTY and PRINCE are holding hands.*)

PRINCE. I must go. The moon is setting.

SYBIL. (*Off*) Beast, take warning!

PRINCE. Go to the castle, and there call the Beast. Tell him you love him.

BEAUTY. I do love him. When I think of him now, I hear you talk. And when you talk, I see his face. You are the same person.

SYBIL. (*Off*) Beast, taking warning!

PRINCE. The moon is almost gone. I must go. Good-bye. And remember now—call the Beast with the magic sign, and he will come, and—

BEAUTY. I remember everything now! I'll forget nothing. Farewell, beautiful Beast!

SYBIL. (*Off*) Beast, taking warning!

BEAUTY. What do I hear?

(*PRINCE exits.*)

Someone is crying in the forest.

SYBIL. (*Enters*) Where is he?

BEAUTY. He just left!

SYBIL. I called warning as I ran back here, but he did not hear me.

BEAUTY. I heard nothing but a faint wild cry.

SYBIL. You would not hear my warning but he—no, I forgot—when he is returned to his mortal shape, he hears no magic. Your father and a crowd of boys are in the castle waiting to kill the Beast. They have tied up the dwarf.

BEAUTY. Cast a spell on them!

SYBIL. I make only good spells, and they are no use against angry men intent on murder. I cannot stop them.

BEAUTY. I'll run and warn him.

SYBIL. You will get killed!

BEAUTY. I don't care! I love the Beast! I love the Beast!

SYBIL. Then take my charm with you.

BEAUTY. What is this?

SYBIL. It is my dying sister's last wish. As she died, she made a wish no one could hear, her voice was so low. But as I went to draw the coverlet over her, I saw on her lips this curious stone—it is her last word. I've worn it on a chain about my neck for three hundred years, not knowing what it was. Perhaps it will help you.

BEAUTY. Thank you, dear Sybil—and thank your sister, for I'm sure if she loved the Prince as well as I, and regretted her cursing him, this last wish is a good one. Thank Theodora for me!

*(LIGHTNING and BLACKOUT. Up LIGHTS Center dimly.)*

FATHER. The lights have gotten dim—that means the Beast is coming! I've heard that from old wives about the fire on a stormy evening. If the candle sputters, the Beast is coming. If the fire grows dim, he is at the door!

1ST BOY. The candles are nearly burned out we have waited so long, and the fire needs wood. It is no magic, but natural things.

2ND BOY. Shall I build up the fire and get new candles? It is darker and I'm afraid.

FATHER. No! Leave it dark and we shall have a better chance to surprise the Beast. We can jump on him in the dark.

AMOS. Hide! He comes.

1ST BOY. I hear someone running, but the footsteps are too light to be those of a man, much less a Beast.

AMOS. The Beast is an animal and runs lightly on his feet. Hide!

1ST BOY. It is the sound of a girl running—not a Beast at all!

FATHER. It is he, I know! I'm old and I know! I've heard him running through the woods on dark nights, and about the house when the sun has set!

AMOS. He is almost here!

FATHER. Strike! Strike the Beast dead!

(*BEAUTY runs in, is attacked, and drops to the floor.*)

AMOS. Poke up the fire, and see the dead Beast!

1ST BOY. (*Brings a candle*) It is your daughter.

AMOS. It's Beauty.

FATHER. What have I done! (*Drops to his knees*)  
Beauty!

AMOS. We've killed her.

1ST BOY. She still lives! She whispers—

FATHER. Daughter, what is it?

1ST BOY. She wants a charred stick from the fire.

AMOS. What for?

(*1ST BOY fetches a stick. BEAUTY struggles to draw on the floor.*)

Stop her! She is drawing the magic sign that will bring the Beast! Stop her!

FATHER. No! Leave her alone. It is her dying wish.

2ND BOY. Stop her if she brings the *Beast*! We all shall die!

1ST BOY. Leave her be.

AMOS. But the Beast! The Beast!

(*AMOS and FATHER struggle; 1ST BOY and 2ND BOY struggle with each other.*)

She's bewitched! She doesn't know what she does!  
She's calling the Beast to kill us all!

2ND BOY. It is too late! She has written—E—R—!

AMOS. I hear him! Run!

(*Crash of THUNDER and BEAST appears.*)

BEAST. You've killed her!

AMOS. Spare us—spare us! We didn't mean to!

BEAST. You've killed her. (*Kneels by her*) Beauty!

2ND BOY. Don't hurt us! Don't eat us—

FATHER. Quiet. Let him kill me. I've deserved this—  
I deserve any death—

BEAST. What is it? What is it?

DWARF. She speaks to you, Master! Listen carefully!

1ST BOY. The dwarf spoke!

AMOS. Run! Run for your life while he isn't looking!

BEAST. Go! Leave me alone! I wouldn't defile myself with touching you! Get out of my house! Get out!

(AMOS, 2ND BOY *start to leave, bumps into* 1ST GIRL *and* 2ND GIRL.)

1ST GIRL. I know the secret of the Beast's life! The mirror! Smash the mirror!

DWARF. Master! Listen to her! Beauty whispers to you!

BEAST. Darling, what do you say?

1ST GIRL. Smash the mirror! It will kill him!

AMOS. (*Leaps to the mantel and grabs the mirror*)  
I will kill the Beast!

BEAST. It is too late! I have—

(AMOS *smashes the mirror. The LIGHTS dim slowly. The BEAST rises slowly to his feet as they fade. MUSIC—celeste and harp.*)

SYBIL. (*In blackness*) The—spell—is—broken!

(MUSIC *forte. Up LIGHTS. PRINCE and BEAUTY stand Center stage in gorgeous white costumes.*)

AMOS. I *did* kill the Beast! He is gone! See!

SYBIL. (*Comes from her hearthside*) Beauty killed the Beast, and liberated the Prince. He is here—this is the Beast that was!

FATHER. My daughter is alive!

1ST GIRL. She is no longer enchanted!

BEAUTY. I was never enchanted. It was the Beast who was under a spell, and now that spell is broken.

AMOS. But I killed him! He's gone.

BEAST. You were too late. Even before the mirror

hit the floor, I heard Beauty say the words that broke the spell— "I love you!"

BEAUTY. And as I said, "I love you," I felt the charm melt about my neck, and a voice I had never heard before cry, "Forgive me!"

SYBIL. The voice of my sister! Your wish made the charm melt, and the words were heard.

PRINCE. I have forgiven her.

AMOS. (*Dejectedly*) I was too late.

1ST GIRL. And I was too late. But I'm glad I came too late! Now everything has ended happily!

2ND GIRL. But what does E.R. stand for, those initials no one could say without summoning the Beast?

BEAST. They are my initials! My name—Edward. My title— Rex! I am—or was—the king hereabouts.

1ST BOY. Long live the king!

BEAST. And my queen.

ALL. Long live the King and Queen.

SYBIL. There is only one way to celebrate a wedding— Who will dance with me?

FATHER. I shall! I haven't danced in years, but I'll try.

AMOS. And I am all alone!

SYBIL. No one is ever all alone, Amos. There is someone waiting somewhere for each one of us. Some day you will meet somebody too, and then you will be lonely no longer. (*Nodding in the direction of BEAUTY and her PRINCE*) But today it is their turn to be happy. Don't you see? So come and dance for them; and when your tomorrow comes, everybody will remember, and will come and dance for you.

CURTAIN

END OF THE PLAY

## BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

### PROPERTIES

Spinning wheel—fireplace in Beauty's cottage.  
Hank of wool—Beauty's cottage  
Charred stick—fireplace in Beauty's cottage  
Hand mirror—small framed mirror which can stand on  
mantel. Brought on by Dwarf.  
Banquet table—appears by "magic" in Beast's castle.  
Farm tools—propped beside fireplace in Beauty's cot-  
tage (hoe, sickle, spade).  
Charm on chain—given by Sybil to Beauty.

#### *Sybil's cottage*

Hood  
Stools (2)  
Logs

#### *Beast's Castle*

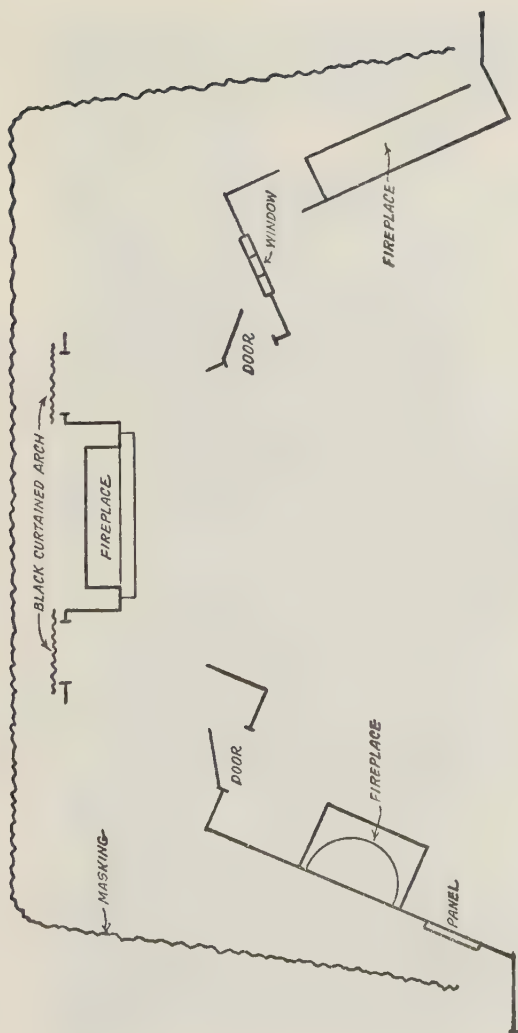
Table  
Chair  
Dress

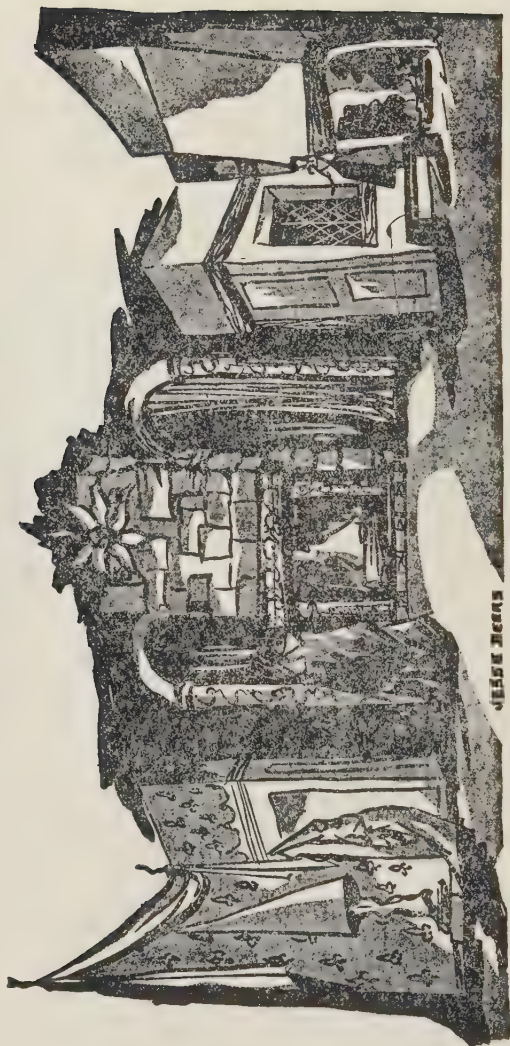
#### *Beauty's cottage*

Bench



SCENE DESIGN  
"BEAUTY AND THE BEAST"





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*for*

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# HERE'S HOW

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## ANNE OF GREEN GABLES

Comedy. 3 acts. By Alice Chadwicke. 4 males, 10 females. Interior. Modern costumes.

L. M. Montgomery's famous and beloved best-seller has now been converted into a magically beautiful and touching play. Green Gables is the home of lovable Matthew Cuthbert and his stern sister, Marilla, who has never been known to thaw out. When they agree to adopt a boy to help with the farm work, imagine their consternation when Anne Shirley, a girl in her teens, is sent by the orphanage by mistake! Anne, with her vivid imagination, her charitable viewpoint, touches Matthew's heart, but it takes time to reach the soft and tender heart beneath Marilla's hard exterior. The comedy that ensues through Anne's many unfortunate mistakes caused by her all too vivid imagination, her loyalty to Matthew and Marilla, her attachment for her bosom friend, Diana Barry, her feud with Gilbert Blythe, the wealthiest boy in town, the episode of Marilla's old amethyst brooch, and many more heart-warming incidents are finally woven into this play. Anne is the sort of part that every young girl will adore playing. The play breathes of youth, is thoroughly modern in spirit, very simple to prepare and present.

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(Royalty, \$25.00.)



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*Adapted from Hans Christian Andersen*

**3 Males, 3 Females, Extras—2 Exteriors—Folk Costumes**

A magic pair of red shoes, which cause anyone who puts them on to dance incessantly, have fallen into the hands of Snogg, a gypsy mountebank. Accompanied by his little mute, Jemmo, Snogg arrives in a picturesque Danish village where he meets Karen, a pretty young orphan girl wearing clumsy wooden shoes. The gypsy tries to abduct the girl for his traveling show by enticing her with the pretty red shoes. As soon as she tries them on, her feet dance away with her and she is whisked out of town. Desperately, Karen tries to remove the red shoes. The poor girl is forced to dance beyond all endurance for the crowd in the streets, while the gypsy pockets the profits. Finally, touched by Karen's sad plight, the little clown Jemmo betrays his wicked master and brings Karen's friend, Nels, the cobbler's apprentice, to the rescue.

*Price, \$1.00.*

*(Royalty, \$15.00.)*

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**8 Male, 4 Female—Interior, Exterior**

The Emperor of China cares for nothing but clothes. The minister of the robes plays on this weakness to rob the royal weavers and persecute the Empress. Two rollicking rogues convince the Emperor that they can weave a stuff which cannot be seen by anyone unfit for the position he holds. Everyone is afraid to confess that he cannot see the new clothes the Emperor orders. The comedy situations which result enable the rogues to save the Empress and the weavers and expose the villainy of the minister. The Emperor proudly walks in procession clad in nothing but a straight little shirt to show his people the glory of his new clothes.

*Price, \$1.00.*

*(Royalty, \$15.00.)*

**MUSIC, \$2.00.**

**(MUSIC ROYALTY, \$3.00.)**



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